



July 17, 2009

The Honorable Tim Kaine
Governor of Virginia
State Capitol
Richmond, VA 23219

Dear Governor Kaine:

I am writing to express concern with the impending closure of rest areas on Virginia's interstate highways. These rest stops serve not only as a convenience to motorists, but also serve as a distinct highway safety asset.

We urge you to reverse VDOT's pending closures that are scheduled to start next week. Likewise, we understand and applaud your efforts to find a solution, including calling a special session of the assembly to address Virginia's transportation funding issues.

That said, the \$9 million expected to be saved by closing these rest areas – must be weighed against the costs in lives and injuries from highway crashes that result from overly tired motorists who unwisely choose to keep driving because of closed rest areas.

Nationwide some 100,000 crashes annually result in 1,500 deaths and 71,000 injuries (according to NHTSA) are a direct result of driver fatigue. Convenient, clean, safe and welcoming rest stops are a key weapon in combating this plague of mayhem caused by fatigued drivers.

We know that Congressman Wolf has contacted you about this issue, and we strongly support his efforts to work with you to find a way to keep Virginia's rest stops open.

They are good for safety and good for the tourism, for which Virginia has become so well known and which brings in so much revenue. We urge you once again to keep these important facilities open.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lon Anderson', with a long, sweeping underline.

Mahlon G. (Lon) Anderson
AAA Mid-Atlantic

CC: Hon. Frank Wolf, Congressman
Hon. Pierce Homer, Secretary of Transportation
Hon. David Ekern, VDOT Commissioner
Brian Shepard, Policy Director
Mark Rubin, Sr. Advisor to the Governor